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 P-Advan, b.v.
 Starnes, Richard
 Soc. 4.012 Requiem
 in Utopia

From The Bookshelf

The Spy Formula

REQUIEM IN UTOPIA: By
 Richard Starnes. 212 pages.
 Trident. \$4.95.

ONE of the minor aberrations of the cold war is the spawning of the so-called spy thrillers. By now the formula is as measurable as the height of the Bradenburg Tor. Make the locale one of the world's hot spots—West Berlin or East Berlin — or, preferably, a neutral country such as Switzerland or Sweden, throw in a few ruthless CIA agents and cruel-mouthed, Red-eyed K.G.B. goons, introduce a vitally important document or a naive scientist who holds the future of the world in his palm, shake it all up and a book is ready for the bindery.

However, there is always a chance that a reader's interest might flag after page 19. Then the author must bring out his faithful girls (oh-so-willing and in various stages of undress) and strike a few sparks as the good old Aladdin in trouble, might have rubbed his magic lamp. Come hell, high water or Helms, this can't miss—most of the time.

Strictly To Formula

Richard Starnes, who knows a bit or two about London and Stockholm, has cooked this one by formula with no imaginative deviation: His superhero, if that is the word, is an American newspaper man who has won all the awards—Pyle, Polk, Pulitzer and even Brown—and comes to Stockholm at the call of a world-respected pacifist and humanist.

This Russell-type, a "rare jewel of decency in a world that stank of putrefaction," is preparing to issue a peace manifesto which the CIA is out to suppress and Russians want publicized for propaganda. Now fill in the details and you wouldn't be off the mark. And don't forget to toss in a fine specimen of those emancipated (whatever the connotation is), classically constructed Swedish damsels.

After wading through this thin book with thinner melodrama, one finds that the only person who is finally double-crossed is the reader. The only mystery in this book is its price.

G. J. ADVANI.